



Residential Assisted Living Facilities Program Newsletter

August 2020 - Special Edition

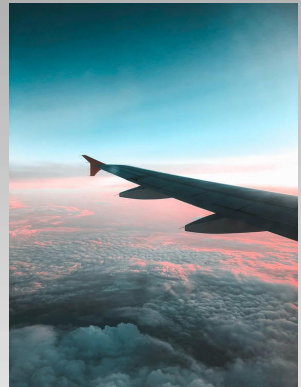
Through the Eyes of a Family Member

By: Sherri Case



The COVID-19 pandemic is a subject that causes grief for care providers, family members and friends. The following story is one that was told to me by a friend who was visiting her family member in a long-term care (LTC) facility. The friend was not bitter about the incident but wished there had been better communication between her and the facility.

Sandra is a female, age 65, with multiple sclerosis. Her husband has been diagnosed with emphysema and a heart condition. Sandra's mother has many health conditions and lives at a long-term care facility. The facility sent an e-mail batch communication to family members of the residents, which informed the family there were residents who had COVID at the facility.



A short time later Sandra received a phone call from the LTC that her mother was not expected to live much longer, there was no indication her mother was suspected of having COVID.

Sandra arranged to leave Oregon to come to Idaho to be with her mother. Sandra stated if she had realized her mother was suspected of having COVID she would not have traveled out of state to visit. Although she wanted to be with her mother, she did not want to take a chance of contracting COVID or exposing her husband to the virus.

Her siblings were contacted, and the seven family members went to the LTC to visit their mother. One of the siblings, a sister, was also in poor health.

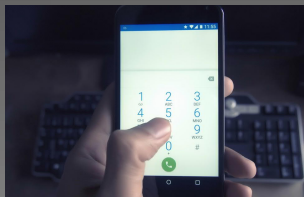


After visiting her mother, Sandra was informed her mother had tested positive for COVID. Sandra and the sister with poor health were not feeling well. Both tested positive for COVID. Sandra and her sister are isolating to prevent further spread of the illness.

Sandra wishes she would have asked more questions to ensure there was adequate communication, however, she had just been told her mother was dying. Who would think to ask questions when hearing you are losing your loved one? If the facility had communicated they suspected her mother had COVID, Sandra would not have visited.

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[www.flareslive.com/
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ProviderLogin.aspx](http://www.flareslive.com/portal/ProviderLogin.aspx)



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Through the Eyes of a Family Member

By: Sherri Case

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Sandra's sister was unable to eat or drink, and Sandra had to take her to the hospital. The hospital pumped fluids into her and prescribed a stronger medication for nausea. Since Sandra and her sister were in isolation, Sandra was the only one who could assist her sister. However, Sandra could not go into the hospital due to her diagnosis of COVID. Sandra asked if she could park in front of my house while she waited for her sister. It was very hot outside, yet I could not invite her into my house. I waved from the door and we talked on the phone. She said she is slowly getting better but is unsure when she will get to go home.

Communication about COVID-19 to family members is vital. The pandemic is spreading. It is probable if communication had been better, there would have been two less confirmed cases in Canyon County.

A quote from Aaron Goldman - "Communicate unto the other person that which you would want him to communicate unto you if your positions were reversed."

Additionally, family members have expressed frustration that Residential Assisted Living Facilities will give immediate discharges to residents with COVID. They understand the facility does not have the capability to provide the care needed, however, many families have not been informed of this possible outcome prior to the immediate discharge and are not in a position to provide the care needed for the resident. Most families are unsure of any resources available or where to start looking for a facility to care for their loved one. Often times they also have health issues and should not be providing care to someone with COVID.

Family members have stated if they had been aware their loved one would be discharged if diagnosed with COVID they would have developed a "back-up" plan. It is important the facility communicate with the family their plans and protocols for when a resident tests positive for COVID. These are stressful, uncertain times for everyone and ensuring we communicate what information we do know can make a big difference.

George Bernard Shaw said, "The single biggest problem in communication is the illusion that it has taken place."

